

**CLAIMS**

1. An automated method for recording of sites accessed by a client in a communications network, the method including the steps of:

5 detecting submission of a search query from the client to one or more search engines; and

recording a search trail of one or more parameters of sites accessed consecutively following return of search query results to the client, for server side storage in the network.

2. An automated method according to claim 1, wherein the step of  
10 detecting submission of the search query includes:

detecting submission of a completed form object from the client;

determining if part of the form object matches a known search command format of any of the plurality of search engines.

3. An automated method according to claim 2, wherein the search  
15 command format includes the network address of a search engine program for executing the search query.

4. An automated method according to claim 3, wherein the search command format further includes one or more search parameters identifying a user-entered search query.

20 5. An automated method according to any one of claims 2 to 4, wherein the step of detecting submission of a completed form object by the client includes:

locating form objects in an object model of content served to a client; and

adding a routine to each form object to enable interception of the completed form object upon submission.

a server-side search trail recorder for recording a search trail of one or more parameters of sites accessed consecutively following return of search query results to the client.

33. A system according to claim 32, and further include:

5 an adapter manager for maintaining an adapter table of known search command formats for the plurality of search engines.

34. A system according to either one of claims 32 or 33, and further including:

a trail searcher for matching the search query to previous search queries to  
10 identify related search trails.

35. A system according to any one of claims 32 to 34, wherein the search query detector is a toolbar, browser addon or extension, deskbar, agent, proxy or like client-side application.

36. A search query detector for use with a system according to any one  
15 of claims 32 to 34.

37. A search trail recorder for use with a system according to any one of claims 32 to 34.

38. An adapter manger for use with a system according to claim 33.

39. A trail searcher for use with a system according to claim 34.

20 40. Computer software including program instructions for carrying out the method performed by the search query detector, search trail recorder, adapter manager and/or trail searcher according to any one of claims 32 to 39.